

Rock Creek Midwifery

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The Honorable Shane Pendergrass
Chair, House Health and Government Operations Committee
House Office Building, Room 241
Annapolis, MD 21401

In Support of House Bill 66 Health Occupations - Licensed Direct-Entry Midwives - Previous Cesarean Section

January 24, 2022

Dear Honorable Shane Pendergrass,

I am writing in strong support of bill HB66, allowing Certified Professional Midwives (CPMs) to attend VBACs.

I am a nationally certified CPM and MD licensed CPM. As such I have a front seat view of the range of families interested in seeking care for perinatal and out of hospital midwifery care. There are a range of reasons people choose this care: some have had negative experiences in hospitals that struggle to provide true patient-centered care in such large systems, some are seeking a setting in which they have the opportunity to know and trust their provider (rather than a large, rotating team), many feel that the birth process is over-medicalized in the hospital and are seeking a provider who can help guide them through this natural process without too much intervention.

This last point is particularly pertinent to this whole discussion. It is often the over-medicalization of birth that results in high rates of cesarean section in hospitals. We see this on a national level, and we see this at the state level in Maryland, where the overall cesarean rate is 33%. Evidence shows that small midwifery practices have lower complications overall, and much lower cesarean rates. In my practice, the cesarean rate is 6%. That is more than five times lower than the MD state average. This is the kind of option that we would like to provide to Maryland families.

Evidence shows that having a vaginal birth after one cesarean is safe when certain criteria are met. This bill includes these safety criteria, providing the opportunity for the 34% of people who had cesareans (many of them unnecessary) the option to seek the kind of care that would reduce their risk of cesarean five-fold.

I have a small number of previous clients who, despite ending up with a cesarean (that 6%) would choose to plan a homebirth with us a second time because they understand that the care that they get with a small midwifery practice provides better care and options than large hospital settings. Under current regulations the choice to birth with the provider they want would be taken from them. We implore you to be part of the movement that gives choice back to families. Please vote to pass bill HB1032, allowing VBAC families to choose a safe homebirth with Certified Professional Midwives.

Kind regards,



Rachel Cipryk, CPM

Owner & Primary Midwife

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